Office of the Vice-President Academic & Provost

To: Faculty Members, Staff Members and Students
Daily Bulletin

From: Geoff McBoyle, Vice President Academic & Provost

Re: Scheduling, Timetable and Examination Project

Date: January 20, 2014

I am pleased to announce that the university will be implementing the new scheduling software, Infosilem, for Spring 2014. The Scheduling, Timetable and Examination Project (STEP) has gone through three simulations and is now ready for production. The new system is driven by student demand and aims to create conflict-free schedules, maximize space utilization, and accommodate instructor constraints and preferences.

What does this mean for students?
With the new system scheduling and timetables will be driven by student demand which means conflict-free schedules and getting into the courses needed for graduation. Students will still be asked to continue to pre-select courses during course selection week. The Registrar’s Office will continue to collect student feedback and communicate with the Federation of Students.

What does this mean for faculty members?
The new system moves from a manual, paper-based scheduling process to an electronic process. The system will accommodate chair-approved instructor constraints and preferences. Instructors should submit all schedule preferences and constraints to timetabling representatives for review and approval by the chair of the department. Scheduling staff will make every effort to accommodate instructor needs and to resolve scheduling conflicts. Collaboration with the Faculty Association will continue to ensure faculty members have access to information and opportunities to provide feedback. Further communications and key dates will follow from the Registrar’s Office.

What does this mean for timetable representatives?
Timetable representatives play a vital role in ensuring students, instructors and departments have the schedules needed. In order to produce an effective schedule it is important to have the right information at the right time. Timetable representatives will collect preferences and constraints from instructors, share with chairs for review and approval, and submit into the system. The Registrar’s Office will support timetable
representatives with enhanced training and clear communication of deadlines and processes.

**What does this mean for departmental staff?**
The new scheduling system makes the best use of teaching space while allowing departments to retain space for department meetings, etc. Departments should submit reserved space time to timetable representatives for inputting into the system. Scheduling staff will make every effort to accommodate departments’ needs and to resolve scheduling conflicts.

**What are the next steps?**
A University Timetabling Committee will be established to discuss deadlines, establish the scheduling process, define business practises, and establish communication channels to ensure information is shared between timetable representatives, the scheduling office and departments. The committee will consult with the Provost’s Advisory Committee on Timetabling (PACT), which provides leadership in the formulation of policies and protocols dealing with classroom scheduling and student timetabling. PACT evaluates and recommends policies, which are then submitted to the Provost for approval.

Further communication from the Registrar’s Office will be sent to each of these audiences with relevant information. Please visit the website, [https://uwaterloo.ca/scheduling-timetabling-examinations-project/](https://uwaterloo.ca/scheduling-timetabling-examinations-project/) for more information about STEP.

Thanks to everyone involved in the simulations and transition to this system.